

Amendments to the Specification

Please amend the Abstract to read as follows:

A sparger system (10) for a reactor (21) ~~comprises~~includes a feed pipe arrangement for feeding reactants to the spargers on the floor of the reactor, via a distribution system disposed above the spargers. The outlets (12) of the spargers are typically oriented towards the floor or parallel to it in order to eject gas or other reactants across the floor. This reduces settling of catalyst on the floor of the reactor, which improves mixing of the slurry and reduces the problems associated with uncontrolled reactions.

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 15, line 21 through page 16, line 7 to read as follows:

In preferred embodiments the spargers are positioned in between the saddles ~~323~~ for supporting the cooling modules as shown in Fig. 5, and are fed from above via feed pipes 10 that are as straight as possible. This configuration helps the sparger outlets 19 to be positioned very close to the floor of the reactor shell 21, as no feed pipework or support structure needs to be located between the sparger and the floor of the reactor. In this example the sparger outlets 19 are less than 10 cm (e.g. 5 cm) above the floor of the shell 21. The sparger distribution pattern on the floor of the reactor 20 is typically chosen to match as far as possible the patten of the cooling modules in the reactor (shown as an outline shape in Fig. 4), so that the reaction between the injected syngas and the other reactants in the presence of the suspended catalyst takes place as far as possible in the vicinity of the cooling modules. This helps to reduce reaction hotspots where too much syngas is added to one particular area for the cooling capacity of that area to control the reaction.